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Damage Control Association

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for

May 1988

The Probe, Issue 83 - May 1988

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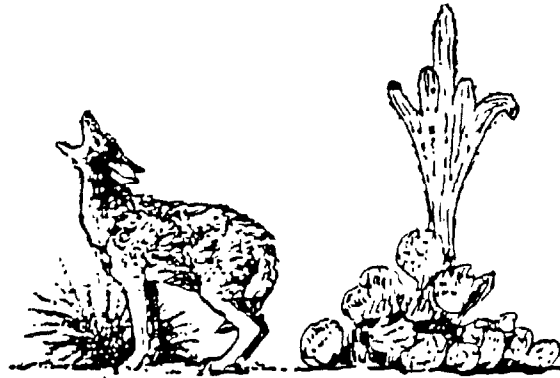
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THE PROBE



National Animal Damage Control Association

MAY 1988

NUMBER 83

GOODBY STRYCHNINE

I got a notice dated May 4th that the DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE had done it to us again. They challenged the continued use of strychnine for the control of prairie dogs, ground squirrels, and meadow mice even if certain label changes were made. The U.S. District Court for Minnesota, in finding for DW, requires EPA to cancel all registration of strychnine for above-ground use. While EPA has asked the Court to clarify portions of its order, we know their heart isn't in the fight and the suit was brought while the USDI was in charge. So it looks like USDA will have to pick up the ball. If you have any questions regarding this order you can contact Judith Wheeler, OGC (LE-132P), USEPA, 401 M St. SW, Washington, DC 20460 (202-382-7510)

The Court (at the risk of showing sexist tendencies, the "Court" was Diana Murphy. As June Green did it to us sometime back in D.C. - I wonder what the track record is when we plead a case before male judges?) knocked it out as a violation of the Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty, Bald/Golden Eagle Protection Act, and Administrative Procedure Act. The list of endangered species at risk with above ground use of strychnine is interesting: Utah prairie dog, Morro Bay kangaroo rat, salt marsh harvest mouse, red wolf, masked bobwhite, dusky seaside sparrow, Cape Sable sparrow, Mississippi sandhill crane, Puerto Rican plain pigeon, Attwaters greater prairie chicken, yellow-shouldered blackbird, laysan

finch, Nihoa finch, California condor (the last of these is in captivity), black-footed ferret, San Joaquin kit fox, gray wolf, and grizzly bear. (How come they missed the whoopers?) Which just goes to show once on the list it is practically impossible to get off.

The gobbledygook is stupendous as is to be expected when lawyers are involved but I did see one ruling mentioned (Natl. Audubon Soc. vs Hester) which I wish would set a binding precedent: "The question for reviewing courts is not whether an agency decision is 'correct', but rather whether the decision reflects sufficient attention to environmental concerns and is adequately reasoned and explained."

I admire a good loser as long as he ain't me.

NO ROOM FOR CATS!

Being the ardent cat-lover I am I was incensed at a flagrant act of discrimination that recently surfaced in San Rafael (CA). Under a housing plan just approved, cats will be barred from a new housing complex. All because of the salt marsh harvest mouse (he's listed above as one of THE ENDANGERED). This animal lives in Marin County's wetlands near the site of the development. Under the plan, homeowners can not keep cats for pets, and must periodically trap any strays that may have wandered near the mouse safety zone. Some claim cats are getting a bad press as dogs are permitted in fenced yards or on a leash and they

and they occasionally catch a mouse too. A Councilman claims that illegal possession of a feline is not enforceable and plans to turn the ruling over at the next council meeting. Meanwhile "A cat apparently got the tongue of the City Planning Director who declines to comment on the matter." (That is a direct quote as I don't want to be held responsible for that bit of overkill.) Thanx to DR. RON JOHNSON (UNIV. NEBR.) and WALL STREET JOURN. 04/18.

Political plums sometimes grow from clever grafting.

MEETIN'S

SECOND INTERNATIONAL SHORT COURSE IN VERTEBRATE PEST PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, Aug. 14-27, 1989 at Colorado State University. Contact: Dr. Julius Nagy, Dept. Fish. & Wildl. Biol., CSU, Ft. Collins, CO 80523.

IN MEMORIAL

ROBERT V. QUIROZ died April 27 in Auburn (CA) where he had spent his last 18 years. He was born in 1913 and grew up in San Bernadino. He spent most of his working years as an ADC Supervisor in various parts of California. A World War II veteran in the Army, he enjoyed hunting, fishing, camping, and traveling. He was a member of the California State Employees Assn., National Rifle Assn., California Rifle & Pistol Assn., NADCA, and GSMOL. He is survived by his wife, Louella of Auburn; son Robert T. Quiroz (Twin Falls, ID) who with his Dad is a long-time member of NADCA; grandchildren Carmen, Susan, and Rory Quiroz (Omaha, NE); and one great-granddaughter. Memorial contributions may be made to the Placer Foothills Consolidated Fire Department.

READIN'

Know the difference between a chiselmouth and a Mexican stoneroller? In case you are interested, the American Fisheries Society in cooperation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has published a book intended to end doubletalk by anglers everywhere as to

just what fish is that? C.R. Robbins' (Ed) A LIST OF COMMON AND SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF FISHES FROM THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA (Amer. Fish. Soc. Spec. Publ. #12) has a plot as boring as the dictionary, but it gives the scientific name, occurrence and the ACCEPTED common name of more fish than you ever believed existed. Really a handy book to settle an argument for those who get serious about our finny friends but is nothing to read from cover to cover.

By the time most people can afford children, they're grandparents.

PESTICIDE TOXICITY

DR. WILLIAM B. JACKSON in a letter (04/10) to the World Health Organization:

I was disturbed by the treatment of anticoagulant rodenticides in WHO RECOMMENDED CLASSIFICATION OF PESTICIDES BY HAZARD. WHO appears to have made the same mistake as US EPA did resulting in serious problems of data interpretation. For example, warfarin is listed as "highly hazardous" with an LD50 of 10 mg/kg. However, the actual acute (single-dose) LD50 for technical warfarin is approximately 200 mg/kg and for mice it is nearly twice that. The reason for the difference is that warfarin (and other first generation anticoagulants) require multiple (e.g., 5-day) feedings at low levels to be lethal.

There is no reason to list first generation anticoagulants with such materials as strychnine and cyanide. While I realize this document deals with "technical" chemicals, the unsophisticated reader is quite likely to misunderstand. I note also that newer rodenticides are listed as "Extremely Hazardous". This may be accurate for some as a technical material. However, they never enter commerce in this form, often being shipped as 0.1% concentrates and these are formulated for use at 50 and 100 ppm.

Help save energy. Don't work so hard.

TEXAS SEMINAR

I had planned on attending the ADC

Seminar in Lubbock (TX) last month, but my brother died suddenly. So Ann and I had to make a quick trip back to New York. Fortunately, JOHN C. JONES (RD, NADCA, Bethesda, MD) did attend and sent me some abstracts of the papers.

DR. FRED KNOWLTON - There are patterns in biology and behavior of coyotes and their livestock depredations. Numbers generally increase from north to south with greatest densities on the highly productive central plains. Abundance is linked to abundance of "natural" (*does Fred include livestock here?*) prey and social factors influencing survival of pups and adults. Predation rates are highest in spring and summer when coyotes are feeding pups. Much more needs to be known about these patterns.

DR. DANIEL B. FAGRE - Results with the Coyote Lure Operative Device (CLOD) for delivering orally-active substances to free-ranging coyotes for research or control purposes. Effectiveness depends on innate biting responses of coyotes to certain odors and shape. Certain synthetic (W-U) and natural products (Carmen's Distant Call) were more effective than others. For the W-U lure 0.10-0.50 cc amounts were more effective than lesser amounts. More pliable plastics and a wider and larger design of the CLOD resulted in better performance.

WILLIAM H. CLAY - Described the Texas ADC program. Program objectives are protection of (1) human health/safety, (2) urban/rural areas, (3) forests/-rangelands, and (4) crops/livestock by (A) technical assistance or (B) direct control. Losses attributed to coyotes are higher than the total with all other species, exceeding \$20 million annually to the livestock industry alone. Watermelon damage in Texas is estimated at \$3 million. Though the average yearly take is between 15-20,000 animals, coyotes have managed to infiltrate every county in the Edwards Plateau, which 40 years ago, was essentially coyote-free.

Lytle Blankenship - Philosophies and policies on ADC have changed over the years. A predator once considered fair

game is now a part of the total ecosystem. THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY has no specific position on predator management.

Stephen Kellert - The growing complexity and diversity of human relationships to animals in modern society, almost always results in predator control being a contentious issue as the relative value of the human activity involved, the predator being controlled, and the species being protected is debated.

If you can't say anything good about anybody, come over and chat with me.

SUGAR-COATING THE BEAR PROBLEM

RON JOHNSON (Wildlife Ext. Spec., U Nebraska) sent me an article under that headline (SACRAMENTO (CA) BEE 04/24). Bears cause hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of damage with their barking of redwoods and conifers to get to the cambium tissue. Understandably, the timber companies consider them oversize rats and a considerable amount of bear hunting has been carried on over the years on the west coast. They have started an extensive test program of the supplemental feeding of bears with sugar-coated fiber pellets in an effort to reduce the damage and save the bears. Small size tests showed that bears damaged 109 trees on a two-acre plot over a three-year period. When the pellets were applied on the same plot, not a single tree was damaged over the next three years. Rots of ruck.

Virtue is its own punishment.

LETTERS TO YE ED

JUPE MEANS, rancher, Buckhorn, NM

Thank you for THE PROBE with your great style of writing- information, a great sense of humor and especially the one-liners. It is read and enjoyed by many here at the ranch. Here are two more subscriptions and a donation for NADCA.

LYN FIEDLER, DWRC, Denver, CO:

Correction - the 2nd International Short Course will be held in 1989 instead of 1988 as reported in THE PROBE #81. The first one, held in 1987 with 22

participants from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, was such a success we decided to push our luck and try again. (Correction duly noted.)

John Cummings, Bowling Green U., OH:
One of the pleasures of being a graduate student under Dr. BILL JACKSON, is getting to read his copies of the PROBE. I've followed your cat stories with great interest, being a cat lover like yourself (Where did he get that idea?). The local campus newspaper had this article:

"In LA a man was sentenced to 30 days for killing his wife's kitten by cooking it in a microwave. In a drunken rage G. Jimenez (26) killed the animal because his wife went to a movie with a female friend."

Seems the poor slob failed to receive proper legal council. If his attorney could have convinced the judge he intended to eat the animal, he might have gotten off with the precedent set in Alaska (THE PROBE #82). Keep up the super reporting work---beats thesis research any day! Sorry, Dr. Jackson. Don't mean to divert your students.

JEFF BREMER, trapper, Mankato, MN:
I just finished reading DR. WALTER E. HOWARD's, NATURE AND ANIMAL WELFARE. It's the best thing I've read in a long time. The information in the book is invaluable. Here's a clip you might use:

"An 80-year old widow, Dorothy Walker, just died and left \$5.1 million to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. This is the biggest donation it has received since it was founded in 1824. Mrs. Walker had no children and only a few distant relatives. She owned a pet cat named, "Kitty", but left no special instructions for Kitty's welfare." There's the secret to fundraising. Unfortunately, I am not adept at buttering up little old ladies with cats.

HARLAN SHUYLER, Pest Control Consult.
Gladstone, MO:

Adults and children in most states must be protected by seat belts while in a moving vehicle. After watching a dog in a car in front of us with its head

and shoulders out a car window, my wife, Sedley, asked, "Why don't pets have to be in a protective device? Why haven't the Animal Rightists, the Humane Societies, etc., started a crusade regarding this? Animals should have the right to be protected from such suffering as may be caused by these accidents of humans." Now that would be a worthwhile cause for them to undertake and leave us alone.

DR. RON J. JOHNSON, UNIV. NEBR., NE:

RE: professionalism and the boozing Santa poem (Dec. issue). I believe the issue is not about having humor in THE PROBE or about professionalism per se, but rather over what is considered to be in good taste. ADC folks certainly had their share of hardships and battles so a little laughter is welcome. Maybe the ability to laugh is what's kept ADC going strong. The catch is that we all vary somewhat in opinions of what is "good" or "bad" humor or what is in good taste.

In deciding on good taste, one question to ask is whether an item would help or hinder the seven NADCA objectives. Another question is how might the item be used against NADCA by folks opposed to the objectives. For example, if NADCA testified on a particular issue as a group of professional wildlife biologists, one way to discredit the testimony would be to discredit NADCA. If the contents of THE PROBE (e.g., the boozing Santa) was read to the jury deciding the issue, would it add or detract from our credibility as a professional organization?

Although most humor in THE PROBE probably would be acceptable to almost anyone, some of it isn't. Some of it has offended even members of NADCA -- members who are not only supportive of the ADC field but who are devoting careers to it. Might it also offend or repel potential new members or supporters?

I suggest three questions regarding items for THE PROBE:

1. Would the item serve NADCA objectives?
2. Could the item be used to discredit

NADCA?

3. Would the item unnecessarily offend members, potential new members, or the public we deal with?

NADCA is a great organization and one with an urgent mission. Let us never forget the human hardships caused by vertebrate pest problems worldwide. We must work together for better solutions and better lives. Is humor that might hinder our collective efforts worth the risk?

I commend Fitz for a great job with a difficult task of producing an informative and readable newsletter. I also commend him for his enormous career contributions to the wildlife damage field. He freely and professionally helped me with information and ideas long before THE PROBE. As NADCA members, we can help by sharing ideas and information that can be put in THE PROBE. Producing a newsletter on a shoestring budget isn't easy, especially one that is as readable and informative as THE PROBE. Sharing ideas can help us all do our jobs better. Fitz might even find use for PG rated one-liners.

Thanks, Ron. I really try to follow constructive criticism. As I have stated before, I am cursed with a salacious, sexist, ethnic, and perverse sense of humor. You have no idea of the personal difficulty I have in discarding some items I'm given even though they are undeniably in "poor taste".

(Though it may seem like it, I didn't write the following myself. I couldn't read the signature and had tossed out the envelop without noting where this came from. So whoever wrote it please claim it and I'll buy you a drink when next we meet.):

Too bad you have to apologize to some members for doing it your way. I always believed "doers" are truly entitled to complain, the others should stand back and appreciate the work that's taking place. I've organized a few retirement luncheons over the years and there's always some clown who complains about the food choices or the prize. I'd rather eat road kill myself at \$19.95 than run another of those things, so

you'll never hear me complain about a luncheon that somebody else organized or a newsletter that one person puts together with almost no help. You're right. You never started out to produce a journal, just a newsy publication that people in the field could rely on for rapid dissemination of current issues. In that regard, you have succeeded and should be proud. My only concern is that when you get run over by a herd of bison at age 105, none of the complainers will pick up the cudgel and keep your valuable publication going.

GARY J. SAN JULIAN (UNIV. NC):

One of my goals as RD in NADCA is to encourage more people to submit material for THE PROBE. In order to do that I need to know your schedule for its printing. Your workload would be a lot easier if both members and directors sent in stories and reports related to the use of animal damage control techniques in wildlife management. (see his report on the TN.WILDL.SOC.HILITES)

(Sorry, GARY, it would require too much efficiency and organization on my part to follow a schedule. For example, I intended to take a vacation in May as I had writers' conferences at both ends of the month in Arizona and Florida. But the news about the strychnine seemed important to get out, not that much can be done. Oh well, the next issue will be June/July. That's about the way it goes. I am busier than when I worked for a living so THE PROBE gets done when the mood is on me. I have shortened my turnaround on submissions somewhat but still have a file full of backlogged items. Anything timely I do try to get in the current issue. So just keep the stuff coming and hopefully I'll get around to it, mañana.)

MIKE WORTHEN, APHIS, Boise, ID:

Things are busy in Idaho. We're in the middle of an Environmental assessment on the Sawtooth Natl. Forest (Sun Valley). We proposed aerial hunting and the locals turned out in force to object to this mass slaughter of coyotes. At the meeting over 100 people showed up which gave us the opportunity to present the real facts to the public on ADC and most went away with an open mind on the

the situation. I think one place ADC has taken it on the chin is the lack of education given to students coming through the school system. I attended a course by Dr. Eugene Decker (Colo.State Univ.) on public speaking techniques and the need for ADC awareness. It was quite refreshing and I would recommend it to all ADC supervisors.

DR. MIKE GODFREY, Eaton Mfg.,
Twinsburg, OH:

I noticed your article on a reproductive inhibitor workshop recently held in Philadelphia. They are behind times. My thesis was on "The potential role of chemosterilants for controlling the European rabbit." (He sent me a copy of a paper on this subject from an ASTM 1977 publication.) The conclusions from a USDA-sponsored workshop in 1974 were the same as those drawn from the one you mentioned -- as far as mammals were concerned there is no single dose, long term, safe and effective product available at an economic price. I guess if you stay around long enough the same questions will be asked and given the same answers. I believe there is tremendous potential, but the development costs, registration, and public perceptions are too restrictive. How about surrogate mothers for sterile rats and ground squirrels?

DWIGHT LEBLANC, APHIS, Lafayette
(LA):

Was most amused at the motorist from New Hampshire (was his last name Bollengier?) who felt compelled to pick up an injured skunk on the highway. It just goes to show that man is one of the few creatures that can self-inflict an ADC problem. Here is a transcription and tape of an actual emergency call placed to the police department in the northern part of this State. (I started to copy this but then in view of the language - even though it was abbreviated - decided not to risk offending some readers. You've got me gun shy now!)

Briefly, the incident is about a man calling from a phone booth to the police department to request somebody with a gun. It seemed a dog chased a deer into his red Cadillac. He picked the deer up

to get it fixed and the dog bit him and chased him into the phone booth from which he was calling. He hit the dog with a tire iron and stabbed him with his knife. While in the phone booth, the deer kicked the back window out of his car and was bleeding all over his leather seats. In between the laughter on the police side, you can hear the dog growling and the desperation in the man's voice. (If any want an unexpurgated account, send me a self-addressed stamped envelope and I'll send you a xerox.)

GERN TERRELL, CO ADC, Roggen, CO:

Got the following at a meeting the other day which is one more case in point that shows what the "do-gooders" get done with their unreasonable approach to everything -

Dr. Bruce Ames (UC-Berkeley) reported on 3,5000 tests run on compounds over the past 30 years. He compared the "Human Exposure Dose/Rodent potential" (HERP) hazard of these with EDB (pesticide which was banned as being "carcinogenic") concentrations found in food. The "RISK" factor shows how much more carcinogenic these substances are over EDB:

| SUBSTANCE | RISK |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Tap water | 2.5 X |
| Aver. house air | 10 X |
| Aver. mobile home air | 1500 X |
| Bacon (100g) | 7.5 X |
| Peanut butter (one sandwich) | .75 X |
| Brown mustard (5g) | 175 X |
| Wine (8 oz.) | 11,750 X |
| Phenobarbital | 40,000 X |

When the meek inherit the earth,
who'll drive the trucks?

TN.WILDL.SOC.HILITES

The Tennessee Wildlife Society focused their annual meeting on ADC and as RD for NADCA, I was asked to keynote the program with a "FUTURE NEEDS FOR WILDLIFE DAMAGE CONTROL." Through panel discussions, conferees were able to visualize the needs and the linkage between various agencies that help control nuisance wildlife. A state-wide committee was proposed to help landowners receive assistance with their

problems.

This committee will help delineate responsibilities for various state and federal agencies to service the landowner in the most efficacious manner possible. The need for developing solutions to urban as well as traditional damage problems was stressed. Wildlife damage control is an integral part of wildlife management and should be addressed as such and not as a separate issue. DR. GARY SAN JULIAN

If prosperity has put us in the mess we're in just think what a good depression would do !

PERSONNEL

REW HANSEN has decided to retire on June 4th after almost 36 years of Service in the ADC program. He has been stationed in North and South Dakota, Nebraska, and North and South Carolina during his career. He has been a good friend and an excellent ADC supervisor.

He and his wife, Joyce, are going to remain in Pierre (*nobody's perfect!*) and catch up on hunting, fishing, photographing, and traveling. There will be a roast for them on June 28th. You can get information on it as well as sending gift contributions, letters, photos, etc. to DARRELL GRETZ, Western RO, ADC, POB 25266, Denver, CO 80225-0266.

Insure a busy tomorrow - procrastinate.

ALL THE NEWS THAT'S PRINT TO FIT

Late last year, 12 inebriated bears were seen cavorting at a fermenting corn pile in Montana. This was the second annual pre-hibernation binge in an area where a corn-laden train had derailed in 1985. The line was reopened but 400 tons of corn were piled beside the track. The bears, like those in the Milwaukee Beer ads, found the cache a year later and were living it up wandering unconcernedly in front of the trains. They tried burying the corn and mixing with quick lime, but the bears sniffed around and found an untainted cache. It is expected many of the same animals

will return to the site when they come out of hibernation this year. Interestingly enough, while both black and grizzly bears are involved, the black bears don't get so pixilated they get chummy with the grizzlies. (NATIONAL WILDLIFE).

Alaska State troopers were on the alert for a mouse who broke into their station and ate some confiscated marijuana. He was described by witnesses as being "very fast" with "dark beady eyes and dilated pupils." Searchers setting traps were very cautious as one remarked, "You never know when a doped mouse can turn on you." Thanx to STEVE EBBERT (who says ADC should be thankful they don't have to put out an "APB" on individual animals they have to control.), APHIS-ADC, Logan, UT & ALASKA (04/88)

Gov. Baliles (VA) beat the deadline in vetoing a bill putting a bounty on coyotes. This measure reportedly garnered more guffaws than serious debate during the session, but apparently coyotes are becoming a serious agricultural problem. The Governor vetoed it as Virginia had abolished bounty laws in 1977 as being ineffective. PHIL EGGBORN commented on this with "and you thought Virginia was just a bunch of crazies." *I did have that thought about bounty systems in particular.*

The shift of the coyote east has raised more problems than just the loss of hamburgers. In Mississippi the watermelon losses to coyotes were about \$17,000 (1986-7 season). Watermelons are grown on almost a third of the total vegetable acreage in the State. This is not a new found food, however. (*I was told by a grower in Rocky Ford (CO), while I was loading a few melons in my car, that coyotes were their greatest problem in melon loss -- after ADC trappers.*) Thanx to DR. RON JOHNSON (Univ.Nebr.) and AG CONSULTANT 04/88.

And the problem is spreading. DON FRYDA (APHIS-ADC Chadron, NE) sent a copy of the SUNDAY WORLD-HERALD (NE) with a gory tale of woe about coyotes moving into Pennsylvania. Before 1980 only six

cases of coyotes killing sheep were verified in Pennsylvania. Now it is estimated there are 2-3,000. Susan Hagood (an old friend from DEFENDERS) says, "Coyotes are opportunistic. They're not evil. We would hate to see Eastern states adopting Western philosophies..." Ronald Novak (USFWS) says, "... (the coyote) is not a disaster. If it is causing people problems, people have themselves to blame." *He never worked for ADC!*

The chief cause of new problems is solutions.

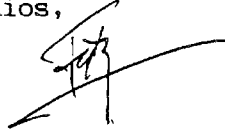
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YE ED -

William D. Fitzwater

Help fight crime - don't elect anybody.

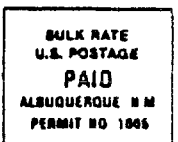
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